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*Spoken by Rep. G. R. Ford Jr.  
G. R. Ford Club - Dec. 28, 1949*

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The Congress as a whole must appropriate the necessary funds to operate the federal government during the next fiscal year. You are all familiar with the fact that the federal government went in the red 18 billion for the year ending June 30, 1949 and that the deficit for this fiscal year will undoubtedly be 5.5 billion. Most economy minded members of the Congress are gravely concerned with the prospect of a 260 billion dollar debt by next July 1st. Although the House may have appropriated too much in the bills initiated last session, the House was far more economy-minded than the Senate or the President. As Al Smith would say, "Let's look at the record." There are 11 regular annual appropriation bills. In 9 instances out of 11 the House version was less than the comparable proposal in the Senate. In 10 cases out of 11 the House bill was less than the amount sought by the President. Only on the question of funds for the Army, Navy and Airforce was the House more generous than both the President and the Senate. With world affairs still critically in the balance, particularly with the threat of Communist aggression in China and the Far East for all intents and purposes a reality, the reluctance on the part of the House to be "penny wise and pound foolish" is understandable.



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Civil Rights legislation will get attention from both the Senate and the House. An Anti-poll tax bill was approved by the House last session. The Senate will probably consider the matter, but whether or not affirmative action is taken, the constant pressure on the federal level has resulted in corrective action by 8 states within recent years. This state-by-state progress is desirable but unless the recalcitrants awaken to the need for the abolition of unfair and discriminatory voting restrictions, the Congress will act as it should.

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teachers. This variation results mainly because in some regions, particularly in the southern states, there is not enough taxable property locally to support an adequate school system.

The Senate bill goes too far in attempting to meet the problem. Instead of limiting federal aid to those areas which are economically poor, Senator Thomas' proposal would distribute some federal funds to every state even though those states like New York, California and others can well afford to support adequately their own educational systems. The Thomas bill if it were a true equalization measure would have better prospects in the House.

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I am convinced because of several recent disputes that the federal government through its top bureaucrats can not and will not spend money in the educational field on the local level without attempting to dictate policy and procedures for the local school officials. For example, the Veterans Administration has been feuding for the last nine or more months with local Michigan school administrators and boards of education as to the method of determining costs for the operation of Veterans Institutes in this state. In effect the VA is arbitrarily telling those who run our local schools that they, the Washington bureaucrats, are better able to determine costs etc. for the operation of a school system. The result is simply this, the Veterans Institutes in Grand Rapids and elsewhere in Michigan will have to be run as dictated by Washington or else no federal funds will be available. This controversy has been and will be harmful to our sound Veterans Institute program in Michigan. This specific dispute might well be a forerunner to disputes of a similar nature if and when federal aid to education becomes law. Perhaps some in our own educational institutions in Grand Rapids, Holland and Grand Haven who formerly favored federal aid but who have been battling the VA's unreasonable position in this regard now appreciate the fundamental and inherent danger of accepting federal funds.

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